

MEMORANDUM

To: House Republicans
From: Rosa DeLauro, Steering and Policy Co-chair
Jan Schakowsky, Steering and Policy Vice Chair
Donna F. Edwards, Chair of the Democratic Women's Working Group
Eddie Bernice Johnson, House Committee on Science, Space and Technology
Ranking Member
Nita M. Lowey, House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member
Carolyn Maloney, Ranking House Member Joint Economic Committee
Louise Slaughter, House Rules Committee Ranking Member
Maxine Waters, House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member
Date: January 10, 2014
RE: A Real Agenda for American Women

We know you are receptive to [memos](#) and have expressed an interest in learning about how [to better communicate with women](#) on the issues important to them. To that end, this memo is in the spirit of moving past partisan politics and working together to ensure America's women and their families have the economic security and opportunities they need to succeed.

Yesterday House Republicans on a Judiciary subcommittee – an all-male panel led by [GOP Rep. Trent Franks](#) – held a hearing on yet another dead-end bill to restrict access to women's health services. At this hearing one of the Majority witnesses, Helen Alvare, admitted to House Republicans that this issue is standing in the way of a “real women's agenda”:

Regular squabbles over federal funding for abortion across myriad pieces of legislation seem to have taken the place of an actual legislative agenda for women's actual needs. Instead of debating policies supporting women's care work, or work/family balance, policies addressing paid leave or social security benefits -- instead of debating ideas about enabling poor women especially to break the cycle of poverty and nonmarital childbearing -- Congress continually debates abortion funding. It is time once and for all to settle the matter of federal funding for abortion, and move on to a real women's agenda. [[1/9](#)]

As [MSNBC](#) noted, some of the measures mentioned have already been introduced by Democrats:

Alvare did mention a couple of policies she would consider more pro-woman than the right to choose and access an abortion, among them paid family leave. In fact, Democrats just [introduced](#) such legislation in both chambers. The Republican silence was deafening. [[1/9](#)]

The constant debates and squabbling the witness decried are a result of Republicans refusing to take action on real legislation to help American women. The time has come to stop wasting taxpayers' time and dollars waging attacks on women's constitutionally protected right to make

informed health care decisions about their own bodies with their own doctors and work on an “actual legislative agenda for women’s actual needs.”

House Democrats have an economic agenda for America’s women, [*When Women Succeed, America Succeeds*](#), which will enable women to achieve greater economic security, raise wages for working women and their families and allow working parents to support and care for their families. Among the policies included in this agenda:

- Paycheck Fairness
- Supporting Women Entrepreneurs and Women-Owned Small Businesses
- Paid Family and Medical Leave
- Paid Sick Leave
- The President’s Preschool and Early Head Start & Child Care Initiative
- Promoting Access to Affordable and High Quality Child Care

Enough of the talking – it’s time for action for American women and their families.